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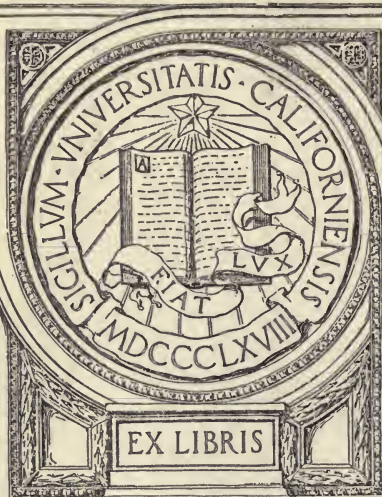
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# The Postponed Millenium

*By* KEITH L. BROOKS



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# The Postponed Millenium



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# Introduction

By PHILIP MAURO.

Having derived both profit and enjoyment from the reading of this book in manuscript form, I take pleasure in commending it to all whose delight is in the Word of God, and who seek to increase their knowledge and understanding of its precious contents.

In these pages will be found a fresh and timely study of a subject of deepest interest. Moreover the form in which the author presents the results of his investigations is quite original and makes it easy for the ordinary reader to get the full benefit of those results. Our author lately found himself (as have many others also in our day) in a state of uncertainty as to what was *the real substance and meaning of the message proclaimed by the Lord Jesus Christ and by His forerunner, John the Baptist, to the people of Israel.* In order to settle this question, our brother adopted a plan which could not fail to yield the desired result. With an open mind, and without recourse to any human "helps," he set himself to the task of examining *every verse* in the four Gospels and in the book of Acts, setting down the testimony of each passage which referred in any way to the purpose of the Lord's first coming into the world. The result is here presented to the reader, whose happy privilege it is to enter, and with but little effort on his own part, into the benefits of the author's labors. The reader may thus have his own questions answered, and his own convictions formed, by the clear and cumulative testimony of scores of passages of Scripture, among all of which is



not to be found a single one which does not fully support the author's conclusion.

The importance of the subject treated herein cannot be over-estimated; for to be mistaken as to the purport of *the Lord's own message* is sure to cause distorted views concerning truth that is fundamental. Error as to the Lord's message has led even to unsound views touching the atonement, as shown by the quotation herein from Mr. S. D. Gordon's writings; and while most of those who share the error referred to are too well grounded in the faith to accept the conclusions which Mr. Gordon and others have deduced from it, the fact remains that such views, and others scarcely less harmful are logically involved in it.

I am thankful indeed for Mr. Brook's valuable contribution to the important question of the hour.

(Signed) PHILIP MAURO.

July 11, 1920.



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# The Postponed Millenium

## IS IT SCRIPTURAL?

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What was the purpose of Christ's first coming into the world? Some may wonder at the need of raising this question. The average Bible student would say at once that "He came to give His life a ransom"; "He came as the Lamb of God to bear the sin of the world"; "He came to seek and to save the lost"; "He came to lay down His life for the sheep"; "He came to be lifted up"—but wait—

There are some who give us a different conception. He came, they say, to present Himself for an earthly kingdom; He came for the purpose of establishing the Millenium; He came making an offer to the Jews, and because they rejected His offer to rule over them, His program was changed. His first plan was postponed and He launched instead upon the establishment of a spiritual kingdom. John the Baptist, we are told, went before Him, announcing His purpose to rule at that time, but His mission was a failure. John will, we are told, have to make a second attempt after Christ gets through dealing with the church, when Christ will give the Jewish nation a second chance, although in this second opportunity He will not seek their support or ask their opinions. He will come with power.

The Cross—this was necessitated because the Jews would not accept His offer of an earthly reign. It was prophesied of course and must needs have been.

S. D. Gordon in his book, "Quiet Talks About Jesus," has carried this theory of Christ's coming to its logical conclusion although many who hold this view would hesitate to express themselves so plainly. Mr. Gordon says on pages 114-116, "His dying was not God's own plan. One needs

## 6. THE POSTPONED MILLENNIUM

always to keep sharply in mind the difference between God's plan and that which He clearly saw ahead and into which He determined to fit in carrying out His purpose." (As if God could not help Himself.) "This explains the Kingdom plan and the necessity for Jesus' finishing up the Kingdom plan at a later day. God's plan was broken and retarded but will be carried through in the end."

The outcome of this theory is a setting aside of the Gospels as far as the church is concerned except as there may be found some moral precepts or some references to the Cross. It also logically leads to a setting aside of the greater part of the book of Acts as not directly applicable to the church. These theories have been expressed in the writings of many well known teachers. The position is concisely stated in a recent booklet by A. Hulsizer ("Essentials of Knowing the Word"). "What is true of the Gospels is equally true and more necessary to recognize in Acts. As God the Son had a clearly defined, twofold mission in the Gospels, even so has the Spirit in Acts, and without recognizing this, the book will never receive its true setting. His first mission is named in Acts 2:36 and closes in Acts 28:26-28." (Up to this point, he argues, the book of Acts deals wholly with Kingdom relationships.) "Now the Holy Spirit enters on His second mission, i. e., the calling out of a people for His name (Rom. 11:25). (Should he not have said "wider" mission—i. e., the chosen people have twice been given the first offer and the Gospel now widens to the Gentiles, according to Acts 1:8). "We may conclude that Acts, instead of being the beginning of our present body relationships is the conclusion of the Kingdom relationships or Jewish history, and that everything set before us in Acts is under 'Kingdom relationship.' From Genesis to the last chapter of Acts God has been particularly concerned with the earth in His purpose." (Mr. Hulsizer leaves us nothing but the Epistles).

Dr. Scofield has said, "It is simple folly to look at the Gospels for church truth. Church truth is given in the Epistles. The later teachings of the synoptic Gospels have

in view neither the Jews then living nor the believers of the church age, but the remnant of Jews who will turn to Jesus as Messiah in the great tribulation." (Does it not seem strange, to say the least, that the great bulk of the New Testament and the first half of it, should be given to instructions that have to do with a brief period of time at the close of the present age?)

The writer frankly admits he has not devoted the years to Bible study that many of these men have. He has in the past held their views because as a young student he took the Scofield Bible as the final word on all Bible questions. Some time ago, however, he discovered that this view of the Gospels and Acts and of the mission of Christ was a very modern one. The early church seemed to know nothing of this theory. All through the church age thousands of the saints have been misled if this theory is correct. The old reliable commentaries do not even mention it.

The writer found himself almost in the same breath teaching that Christ was the one Man Who came into the world to die and not to live—that His very incarnation was for the purpose of His atoning death—that He *must* first come as the suffering Redeemer before He could ever come to reign, the resurrected, glorified Man—and then he found himself saying that Christ came to offer an earthly kingdom to the Jews and had He been received at that time His kingdom would have been immediately set up. Often inquirers raised the question—"But, suppose He had been accepted, what then of the atonement for sin and the fulfilment of the Scriptures?" Our only answer was that it would have been accomplished in some other way (although it was evident that had it occurred in some other way it could not have fulfilled prophecies), and if the question was pressed too hard, we dismissed the whole matter by saying that since the Jews did not accept Him as their King, there was no need to discuss the question.

It was seen from Scripture that the Cross was the eternal purpose of God for the redemption of mankind—yet I found myself saying at times that God had another thought which

He introduced ahead of the Cross, an earthly kingdom for His Son. It was seen that wherever the order of events was given in the prophecies, it was always first a suffering Messiah and then a King coming in power (See Luke 24:26 and 46; Acts 17:3; 1 Pet. 1:11), yet I found myself reversing the order. It seemed that there was not the slightest possibility of Christ's avoiding the Cross at the appointed time, not the faintest suggestion in His words or actions that He had come to proclaim Himself an earthly Monarch—yet I seemed to teach that He went about making a *bona fide* offer of an earthly kingdom.

It was seen that in Christ's final commission He charged His own "to teach all things whatsoever He had commanded," and that in the Epistles the believer was repeatedly directed to the words of Christ as the final court of appeal. (1 Tim. 6:3; Col. 3:16; Heb. 1:1; 2:1). Yet my whole effort was to evade the words of Christ by assigning the Gospels to another age. (See also Jn. 17:4, 6, 8, 12, 21, 23, 24; 15: 7, 10). My inconsistencies made me extremely uneasy.

Some one may ask, "Did not Christ have first to offer Himself as an earthly King in order to expose Himself to rejection and the Cross?" In answer to this question I wish to submit the result of some research recently made by me in the Gospels and Acts. In 1917 Mr. Ivan Panin raised some important questions in my mind, driving me to the Word of God. Soon after, Mr. Philip Mauro issued his books in opposition to the "postponement theory." I found relief in regard to some of my problems, but also experienced certain confusion. The pressure of this situation drove me to my Bible. I went carefully over the Gospels and Acts, noting on paper every passage that in any way related to the *purpose* of Christ's first advent. I laid aside all human helps while doing this work, asking the Holy Spirit to be my Teacher as I wrote after each passage what seemed to be the plain teaching thereof, taken by itself. It is the result of this work that I am herewith submitting, in the hope that it will serve to clarify the minds of others as



it has clarified my own. I ask the reader to dismiss from his mind, so far as possible, all preconceived theories, and, after having examined each separate passage, and after having taken a view of the whole, to answer for himself the question—Was Christ's first mission a failure? Was the millenium proposed by Him at that time and then postponed?

## PURPOSE OF CHRIST'S FIRST COMING

### MATTHEW

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| Mt. 1:21 | Came to save His people from their sins.  |
| 1:23     | Came as revelation of God in the flesh.   |
| 3:11     | Came to baptize with Holy Ghost and fire.   |
| 3:12     | Came to gather wheat into His garner.   |
| 3:15     | Came to fulfill all righteousness.  |
| 4:11     | Came to defeat the devil.   |
| 4:16     | Came as a light to a people in darkness.  |
| 4:23, 24 | Came preaching preparation for a kingdom <i>at hand</i> and proving His claims by miraculous powers.                    |
| 5:17     | Came to fulfil law and prophets.  |
| 6:9      | Came to teach disciples relationship to Jehovah and how to pray to Him.   |
| 7:29     | Came to teach with divine authority concerning spiritual welfare.   |
| 8:16, 17 | Came casting out demons and healing sick, in fulfilment of prophecy, thus identifying Himself as the appointed Saviour. |
| 9:6      | Came healing sick in proof of His claim to have power to forgive sins.  |
| 9:13     | Came to call sinners, not righteous, to repentance.   |
| 9:15     | Came as the bridegroom.   |
| 9:35     | Came preaching gospel of a kingdom at hand, proving His authority by healing miracles.                                  |

- 10:34 Came not to send peace but a sword.
- 10:35 Came to set men at variance among themselves.
- 11:5 Came to heal and preach gospel.
- 11:27 Came to make known Father to whomsoever He will reveal Him.
- 11:28, 29 Came to give rest of soul.
- 12:8 Came as Lord of Sabbath day.
- 12:18 Came to show judgment to Gentiles.
- 12:21 Came to be trust of Gentiles.
- 12:40 Came to die and be resurrected after three days.
- 12:41 Came as one greater than Jonah, to preach repentance.
- 12:42 Came as one greater than Solomon to reveal wisdom of God.
- 13: Came to sow the seed of the word in all "the world."
- 13:44 Came as purchaser of a field in which there was a treasure.
- 13:45 Came as seeker after a pearl of great price.
- 14:33 Came as Son of God.
- 15:30 Came to heal sick.
- 16:4 (See 12:39-40.) Came to be buried and resurrected after three days.
- 16:16-18 Came as Son of God, the Foundation upon which the church should be built.
- 16:21 Came to suffer, die and be raised, a *purpose from which nothing must turn Him.* (v. 22-23.)
- 17:5 Came as divine Son with authority to speak.
- 17:9 Came to be raised from dead, until when the kingdom He came to establish could not be.
- 17:22, 23 Came to be betrayed into men's hands, killed and raised again.
- 18:11-13 Came to save that which is lost.
- 20:18-19 Came to be condemned to death, and to be raised the third day.

- 20:28 Came not to be ministered to, but to give life a ransom.
- 21:5 Came as King in meekness riding upon an ass
- 21:9-11 Came as Son of David, in the name of the Lord. *Understood by those who hailed Him to be prophet of Nazareth.* (v. 11.)
- 21:33-41 Came as one sent by Father to see if people would reverence Him. ((v. 37.)
- 21:42 Came as Stone rejected of builders, yet to be made by God, headstone of corner.
- 22:2 Came as Bridegroom for whom a wedding was being prepared.
- 22:44 Came as one who was to sit on Father's right hand until His enemies be made His footstool.
- 23:8, 10 Came as the Teacher of His people.
- 23:37 Came seeking to gather His people to Himself and mourned that the chosen people, Israel, would not recognize His mission. They have since been a desolate people. (v. 38.)
- 26:39, 54 Came to drink cup which *must* be in order to fulfil Scripture.
- 26:52-54 Came to be sacrificed, which *must be* according to Scripture, *and from which He did not shrink and wanted no deliverance.*
- 27:35 Came to be crucified in fulfilment of Scriptures. In v. 43 note He was *crucified because of claims to be Son of God* (Jn. 5:17), *not because of seeking a throne. They sought Him for this and He refused.* In v. 54 note that some began to realize that the claim He had made and for which He was rejected was true. (v. 37, the Romans put this title "King" on His cross as a slur on the Jews.)
- 27:63 Came to be killed and resurrected (not made King) and rulers feared He would carry out His prophecy of Resurrection.



28:19-20 Came *giving commands to be faithfully taught* and executed to the end of the age. (Not to be cast aside as Jewish.) *What were the commands?*

### MARK

- Mk. 1:8 Came to baptize with Holy Ghost.  
 1:11 Came to be manifested as beloved Son.  
 1:14 Came preaching gospel of God's kingdom soon to be set up.  
 1:22 Came as Teacher with authority.  
 1:32, 34 Came healing and casting out demons in proof of His claims as Savior.  
 2:5, 8-11 Came to forgive sins, demonstrating His authority by healing.  
 2:17 Came not to call righteous but sinners to repentance.  
 2:19-20 Came as Bridegroom who was going away again (to take to Himself a bride.)  
 2:27 Came as Lord of Sabbath.  
 6:56 Came to make men whole.  
 8:29-31 Came as suffering Messiah, rejected, killed, resurrected. (*Not capable of being tempted at that time to take earthly kingdom.* v. 32-33.)  
 9:7-9 Came as beloved Son of God who was to be sacrificed and raised. (v. 12.)  
 9:31-32 Came as Son of Man, to be killed and raised again (v. 32, *they wholly misunderstood His mission.*)  
 10:33, 34 Came to be delivered up, killed and raised again.  
 10:45 Came to give life a ransom.  
 12:6 Came as Divine Servant, seeking fruit of the vineyard.  
 12:35-37 Came as Lord who should sit at right hand of Father until enemies made His footstool. (16:19.)

- 13:34 Came with expectation of going on a far journey, has authorized servants to act in His absence.
- 14:21 Came to go to death *as it was written of Him.*
- 14:24 Came to shed His blood for many.
- 14:27-28 *Came to fulfil Scripture*—they would smite the shepherd but He would rise again.
- 14:61 Came announcing Himself the Christ, the Son of the Blessed, *the charge which was made against Him.*
- 15:27, 28 Came to be numbered with transgressors, according to Scripture.
- 15:39 Came as Son of God. (*Killed for this claim. Centurion now believes His claim was correct.*)

## LUKE

- Lk. 1:31-33 Came announced as Jesus (a Savior) who should be great and who should be heir to Davidic throne to reign forever. (Doesn't say when He should take throne. If it meant at that time, it was not a true prophecy.)
- 2:10-11 Came announced by angels as "Savior," for "all people."
- 2:29-32 Simeon filled with Spirit announces Christ as God's "Salvation"—Light to Gentiles and Glory of Israel.
- 2:35 Simeon hints that the Savior is to undergo some great trial (cf Jn. 19:25). (Did Simeon have impression Christ had come then to offer Israel a kingdom?)
- 2:49 Came to be about His Father's Program.
- 3:22 Came announced from heaven as beloved Son of Father.
- 4: 3-13 Came as Son of God to overcome Satan.
- 4:17-19 Came to preach good news to poor, heal broken hearted, give deliverance to captives —

- to preach the *acceptable year of Lord* (whatever the latter refers to, it was then being fulfilled—v. 21).
- 4:40 Came to heal sick, to demonstrate His divine authority (v. 41).
- 5:20–24 Came healing sick in proof of His authority to forgive sins.
- 5:32 Came to call sinners to repentance.
- 5:34–35 Came as Bridegroom.
- 6:5 Came as Lord of Sabbath.
- 7:14–16 Came raising dead, proving that in Him God Himself was visiting His people.
- 7:22 Came performing miracles in demonstration of His being fulfilment of John's prophecies.
- 8:1 Came preaching glad tidings of God's kingdom.
- 9:18–20 Came seeking recognition as Son of God.
- 9:22 Came to fulfil Scripture as rejected Messiah.
- 9:30–31 Came to accomplish sacrifice. Moses and Elias are interested in this (no mention of earthly kingdom).
- 9:44–45 Came to be delivered into hands of unbelievers. (Disciples could not understand meaning of it until afterward.)
- 9:51 Came to be offered at a set time. Steadfastly set face in that direction. He *would* follow this plan in spite of their opposition (v. 52-3) and wanted no supernatural deliverance (v. 54-5).
- 9:56 Came not to destroy but save lives.
- 10:22 Came to reveal Father to whomsoever He would.
- 12:49 Came to send fire on the earth. It was already kindled.
- 12:50 Came expecting a baptism of sorrow and was straitened until it be accomplished.
- 12:51–53 Came not to give peace but sword.

- 13:32-33 Came to cast out demons, cure sick and to be perfected at Jerusalem.
- 13:34-35 Came to gather Jews into His kingdom, but they would not be gathered. Their national condition therefore to be one of desolation until His return.
- 14:16-24 Came inviting Jews to the great feast, but in their deafness He sends into highways for the guests and those who were first bidden miss the feast.
- 16:1-2 Came to make Israel give account of its stewardship, and if they fail, they cease to be His stewards.
- 18:31-34 Came to fulfil prophecies telling of suffering Messiah, and to be raised again. (Disciples did not comprehend, v. 34.)
- 19:12-27 Came as nobleman who would go into far country until his kingdom be received; then to return to reckon with his representatives on earth. (v. 11: People were looking for some great outward demonstration immediately on earth. He shows them this cannot be.)
- 19:37-38 Came hailed by multitude as King that cometh in name of the Lord. (Jesus does not recognize or respond to their acclaims of Him as King. His face is set toward Jerusalem for another purpose. v. 43-44.)
- 20:9-16 Came as Son of God to see if His own people would reverence Him, but knew they would kill Him.
- 20:17-18 Came as Stone rejected of builders, yet to be made Headstone of corner.
- 22:6-16 Came knowing He must suffer at a set time.
- 22:20 Came to shed His blood for us.
- 22:48-51 Came to be betrayed. Would accept no deliverance.
- 22:22 Came to be rejected as before determined.

- 23:2-5 Jesus charged with trying to upset nation and claiming throne. (The charges were false. Had not set Himself up as king and had told people to support government. Cp. Jno. 18:33-36, Mt. 26:59, Lk. 23:14.)
- 24:6-8 Came to fulfil a program from which there was no escape. Crucifixion and resurrection. (Note 24:13-21. The two made no mention of Jesus as King but as a mighty Prophet whom they expected would be the means of delivering Israel.)
- 24:25-27 Came on one definite mission, to fulfil prophecies regarding a suffering and resurrected Messiah. (He calls them "fools" that they had not understood, since He had often told them that He came not to set up a temporal kingdom at that time.)
- 24:44-46 Came to fulfil prophecies of a suffering Savior (reminds them that He had continually emphasized these prophecies, yet they still kept looking to Him as a temporal king.)
- 24:47 Came that remission of sins might be preached to all nations. (Was this not John the Baptist's gospel also?)

## JOHN

- Jn. 1:4-5, 9 Came as Life and Light of men.
- 1:14 Came as God in human flesh, manifesting grace and truth.
- 1:18 Came to reveal Father in human flesh.
- 1:29 Came announced as Lamb of God, Sin-Bearer for the whole "world"—not for Israel only.
- 2:11 Came performing miracles in manifestation of His divine glory.
- 2:18-21 Came as one who would be destroyed and raised up. (Disciples *afterwards* remembered that He had announced Himself in this way, v. 22).



- 3:14-16 Came as one to be lifted up as was serpent in wilderness that those believing in Him might be saved.
- 3:17-18, 36 Came as one sent of God that *world* through Him might be saved.
- 3:29 Came announced as the Bridegroom.
- 3:31-33 Came to bear witness from the Father.
- 4:10 Came as Gift of God (see 3:16).
- 4:14 Came as Giver of living water (Spirit).
- 4:42 Came understood by some to be the Savior of *the world* (even Samaritans). He saved Samaritans even before He began to preach to Israel.
- 5:18 Came claiming equality with Father (why He was finally killed).
- 5:19-20 Came empowered by Father to do mighty works.
- 5:21-22 Came empowered by Father to raise dead and judge all men.
- 5:23 Came demanding equal honor with the Father.
- 5:24 Came as Giver of life.
- 5:36 Came to finish certain works for the Father. (Later — "It is finished.") His miracles would testify of His heavenly commission.
- 5:43 Came in His Father's Name.
- 5:46 Came in fulfilment of Moses' writings.
- 6:14-15 Came misunderstood as to His mission. They would make Him King by force, but He withdraws. (Some say He did not accept because Kingdom was not to be set up by force but given Him of the Father. But when millennial Kingdom comes, it *will* come with force.)
- 6:33-57 Came as Bread of God and Bread of life.
- 6:63 Came to speak life-giving words.
- 7:7 Came to testify of world's lost condition.
- 7:28-29 Came as One sent from Father and who was to be rejected. (They could not kill Him,

- however, until the appointed hour, v. 30.)
- 7:33 Came to be on earth a little while and then to go away.
- 7:37-39 Came as Giver of living water.
- 8:12 Came as Light of the world.
- 8:19 Came to make known Father.
- 8:26-28 Came to speak to world message from the Father.
- 8:51 Came as One whose words had power to give everlasting life.
- 8:59 Came as One who had existed before Abraham.
- 9:4 Came to work works of Him that sent Him.
- 9:5 Came to be Light of world as long as He was in world. (Implied He had not come with intentions of staying.)
- 9:35-37 Came as Son of God.
- 10:7-9 Came as Door of the sheep that through Him they might enter into fold.
- 10:11 Came as Good Shepherd.
- 10:15 Came to lay down His life for the sheep.
- 10:16 Came to bring sheep not only from Jewish but other folds (i. e. Gentiles.)
- 10:17-18 Came to lay down His life that He might take it again. (v. 20—Jews could not understand His mission.)
- 10:28 Came as Giver of eternal life.
- 10:36-38 Came as One set apart of Father and sent into world, whose miracles were to testify of the fact.
- 11:25 Came as Resurrection and the Life.
- 11:50-51 Came to die for the people. (The high priest unwittingly tells the truth.)
- 11:52 Came to die not only for Israel but to gather in one all who would be children of God.
- 12:12-15 Came acclaimed by people as King who cometh in Name of the Lord, fulfilling prophecy about His coming in meekness, riding on an



ass. (Disciples did not see significance of this until after He was dead and raised—v. 16.)

- 12:23–24 Came to die and be raised.  
12:27 Came to hour of crucifixion, from which He wanted no escape. *For this He came into world.*  
12:28 Came to glorify Father's Name.  
12:32 Came to be lifted up for the drawing of all men.  
12:35–36 Came to be as a light for a little while.  
12:38 Came fulfilling prophecy that He would be a rejected Messiah.  
12:46 Came as light in dark world.  
12:47 Came to save world, not condemn it.  
12:49–50 Came to voice Father's will for men.  
13:15–16 Came as an example of humble service to God's children in His Name.  
13:18–19 Came to fulfil Scripture concerning Messiah who would be betrayed.  
14:6 Came as Way, Truth and Life.  
14:10–11 Came to speak divine words to men.  
14:28–29 Came to be on earth for little while, then go away. (Tried to make this clear from the first so they would understand when He was killed.)  
15:5 Came as true Vine from which fruitful branches were to grow.  
15:22–23 Came to convict world of sin.  
15:25 Came expecting to be hated without a cause.  
16:28 Came from Father to be in world but a little time.  
17:1, 2 Came to glorify Father in His death; to give eternal life to as many as the Father gave to Him.  
17:4 Came to finish work Father gave Him to do.  
17:6 Came to manifest Father's Name to those given Him.

- 18:10-11 Came to be delivered to executioners, and would accept no deliverance from men.
- 18:32 Came testifying continually of His coming death.
- 18:33-36 Came to set up a kingdom which is not of this world. (Is this not the kingdom John and He had preached?—3:16.)
- 18:37 Came admitting Himself a King but saying His mission was to bear witness of truth (not set up rule—v. 36), Their chief grievance was that He had *made Himself Son of God* (19:7).
- 19:19-21 Note that the title “King of Jews” on cross was put on by Romans as a slur on Jews. Having rejected Him they could not stand this and asked to have wording changed. Pilate, however, had unwittingly told the truth and would not change it.
- 19:28 Came accomplishing prophecies concerning suffering Savior. It was now “finished”—v. 30. (Was this not what He referred to in beginning when He said, “I must be about My Father’s business”?)
- 19:33-34 Came fulfilling Scriptures concerning crucified Savior.

### ACTS

- Acts 2:22-24 Jesus came approved of God by His miracles, to be slain and to rise again according to the divine purpose (“determinate counsel”—this was His determined course.)
- 2:29-31 Was the One foreseen of David, Who should be raised from the dead to sit on his throne. (He could not take the Davidic throne until He became a resurrected Man. He alone has title to the Davidic throne, but the time has not come for Him to assume it. 1:6-7; 2:34-35).

- 2:38-39 Was the One by whom believers should have remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit (Mt. 3:11).
- 3:13-18 Came to suffer according to the divine program as declared in the prophecies (note v. 19-21 does not actually say God would send Jesus Christ back *right then* if the Jews would receive Him *as King*. And this could not be implied because the next verse, which is part of the same sentence, distinctly states that the heavens *must* receive Him until the "times of restitution" spoken of by the prophets, which could not be until "the times of the Gentiles" be fulfilled. What verse 19 speaks of is not a season of refreshing *by* or *through* the *coming* (parousia) of Christ, but away from (*apo*) the presence (prosopos) of the Lord, *i. e. from where He is now*. See Acts 5:41 and 2 Th. 1:9, where the same expression is found. The word "times" in v. 19 is a different word from "times" in v. 21, and has a different signification. When "sins are blotted out" there is always a season of refreshing.)
- 3:25 Came as One of whom it was said that as the Seed of Abraham, He should be the means of blessing all the kindreds of the earth (Gal. 3:8).
- 4:11-12 Came as the One of Whom it was foretold that He would be set at nought of men, yet made Chief over all—in Whom alone salvation could be obtained.
- 4:27-28 Was One of whom Scripture prophesied that men should gather against and abuse, while fulfilling the very counsel of God. (His rejection and suffering an absolute necessity.)
- 5:31 Exalted as Prince and Savior to give re-

- penitance and remission of sins to Israel (first).
- 7:37 Came as the One before signified — as Prophet whose message was to be heard.
- 7:52 Came as the Just One, foretold by the prophets.
- 10:34–36 Came as the One through Whom alone peace of heart could come to men—whether Jew or Gentile. (Note: What was the message they had been preaching to the Jews beginning at Pentecost? Was it to the effect that if Israel would receive the King, the earthly kingdom would be immediately set up? According to this text, the message was that peace was obtained only in Christ—the same message ever since preached to Gentiles (Eph. 2:14). Peter's vision in this chapter was to teach him that the message *he had been giving was for the Gentiles also.*)
- 10:38–43 Was the Savior of the world, approved by His miracles and sealed as of God by His resurrection (Apostles understood that their commission was to preach Him as Judge of the quick and dead, through whom men have remission of sins by believing in Him, "Whosoever"—the meaning of which has just dawned on Peter.)
- 11:17–18 The One through whom repentance unto life should be given, not only to Jew but Gentile. (Evidently they proceeded to declare to the Gentiles the same message they had been giving Jews since Pentecost.)
- 13:22–26 Came as the Seed of David, a Savior whom John first announced to Israel, entreating them to repent and receive the word of salvation.
- 13:27–39 The perfect One, who was crucified accord-

ing to the divine counsels and raised again, that the glad tidings of salvation might be preached to men — complete justification. (Note that the *promise* to Israel concerning salvation was fulfilled in *Jesus' death and resurrection*. The message they had been preaching since Pentecost was forgiveness of sins and justification through the crucified and risen One, the same message given to Gentiles, v. 18–19. The distinct turning to the Gentiles now about to take place is occasioned by the Jews' rejection of the complete message of the risen and glorified Savior, even as they had before rejected the announcement of Him as the Passover Lamb, v. 46–47).

- 15:9–11 The One through Whose grace, salvation was to come to men, whether Jew or Gentile.
- 15:14–18 The One through Whom salvation was to be declared, and who *afterward* would rebuild the tabernacle of David, and fulfil all His promises to Israel. (Note that God's program is clearly stated. 1. Outgathering of the church, v. 14. 2. Regathering of Israel, v. 16. 3. Ingathering of all men, v. 17. How could the order be reversed, or is it even thinkable that God should offer to give Israel their kingdom before atonement and resurrection had been accomplished? James says that "to this *agree* the words of the prophets." Yet modern teachers assert that the prophets put the earthly kingdom first in the order of events that were to come.)
- 17:3 Came to suffer and rise again in fulfilment of prophecy.
- 20:21 Came to require repentance and faith of men. (Note that message to Jews and



- Greeks was the same. The message which began at Jerusalem was that to be declared to the whole world, 1:8.)
- 26:22-23 Came to suffer for sin and be raised from the dead to show light to Israel and Gentiles in fulfilment of prophecy. (Note that the Gospel Paul preached from the first he is still preaching.)
- 28:23, 28 Came in fulfilment of law and prophecies to bring salvation. (*Same* "salvation of God" Jews rejected is presented to Gentiles.)

### WHAT THEN OF "THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN?"

Should not the phrase be interpreted in the light of the purpose of Christ's first advent? If our interpretation of it makes discord with that purpose, are we not safe in concluding that we have a wrong interpretation? Let us then turn again to the Scriptures.

It was "at hand" when John preached preparation for it (Mt. 3:2), and when the Lord Jesus preached preparation for it (4:17). Entrance into it requires a righteousness above the best human righteousness (5:20). Its true citizens will lay up their treasures not on earth, but in heaven (6:19:20). Mere lip service is not the badge of its true citizens (7:21-22). Its citizens have a higher position than John who announced it (11:11). It covers a period during which seed is to be sown (13:19-33), and during which Satan will try to counteract the good seed by sowing counterfeit (13:24-30). Outwardly it is to have an abnormal growth in the world (13:31-32). It covers a period during which the devil will make continual effort to overcome the true with the leaven of false doctrine and at the close of which "the whole will be leavened" (13:33-35). At the end of its period all hypocrites who have sought to identify themselves with it, will be cast out (13:41-43). It was made possible by the paying of a great price (13:44). The

privilege of throwing open the doors of this kingdom when all things were ready, was given to Peter (16:19-20). Entrance into it is conditioned on being converted and humbled as a little child (18:2-4; 19:14). Its true citizens, having been forgiven of their sins are expected to have a forgiving spirit toward others (18:23-35). To enter it is to be saved, although the rich will not find access to it easy (19:23-25). It is a Kingdom into which many are invited, but few find entrance (20:1, 16). The Jews expected it to be an earthly kingdom and sought places in it, but Christ explained that places of honor in it were to be gained by following Him and bearing His cross (20:20-23). Publicans and harlots find entrance into it easier than the self-righteous (21:31). Its true citizenship is comprised of those who reverence God's Son and bring forth fruit (21:37, 43). Its completion depends upon bringing in men from the highways and byways, (i. e., Samaritans and Gentiles), those to whom it was first proclaimed (the Jews) having ridiculed the call (22:2-14). It shall be preached until all nations have had the witness and then shall the end of the age come (24:14). At the second coming of Christ it will be manifested who are its true citizens and who are merely connected with it in the sphere of profession (25:1-13). It has an absent Overseer Who in His absence entrusts His interests in the hands of His servants, whose rewards at His return will be based on the use made of that entrusted to them (25:14-28).

This is what the Gospel of Matthew says about the Kingdom of Heaven. Two passages only we have passed over. These are Mt. 8:11 and 11:12, both difficult of interpretation (but not any easier of interpretation by those who teach the postponement theory).

(1) Mt. 8:11—Many shall come from the east and west and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of the heavens.

Jesus was commenting upon the faith of a Gentile centurion. Such faith, He said, He had not found in Israel, the chosen people, who throughout the centuries had sup-



posedly been looking to His day through their sacrifices. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had offered in faith. Jesus said that many should come from the nations and have a part in that Kingdom to which Abraham, Isaac and Jacob belonged by faith, while the Jews would come short of it. If the Kingdom of Heaven here refers to the millennial kingdom, it is clearly stated that the natural heirs of the kingdom (the Jews) will be cast out of it with weeping and gnashing of teeth. But if it refers to the spiritual kingdom of this era then we have simply the truth declared by Paul in Romans IX-XI and illustrated by the figure of the olive tree, some of whose natural branches (Jews) are broken off, while branches of a wild olive tree are grafted in. The words "Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" in Matthew 8:11, represent the true "Israel," the stock of the olive tree.

(2) Mt. 11:12—From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence and the violent take it by force.

Surely the millennial kingdom will not be captured by the violent. Dr. Strong translates the words "suffereth violence" as "is crowded into" and the words "take by force" as "the energetic grasp it." The Companion Bible says, "The forceful ones lay hold of it." The Cambridge Bible says, "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven forceth itself upon men's attention (men began to press into) and the earnest win their way into it."

The foregoing renderings do not throw much light on the meaning of the passage, which doubtless will repay further study. It has been suggested that the Lord is here alluding to the violence suffered already by John the Baptist and later by Himself. Support for this suggestion is found in the fact that the Lord, on several occasions identified the Kingdom of God with His own Person. Thus in the very next chapter He said, "If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God is come unto you" (Mat. 12:28). The Kingdom of God is that Spiritual domain wherein the Spirit of God is and acts (Rom. 14:17). Also in

Luke 17:21 the Lord was plainly referring to Himself when He said, "Behold, the Kingdom of God in the midst of you now IS" (Gr.)

The Gospel of Matthew in which the expression "kingdom of heaven" occurs no doubt presents Christ especially to the Jewish mind. It was of the line of David from which the Savior was to be born. The Jews at that time had one thought uppermost—an earthly king and kingdom. There is presented to them a *kingdom of the heavens*. Had Jesus given them an earthly kingdom that should put Israel in her rightful place over the nations, they probably would have met any terms. But did not Jesus repeatedly set aside the suggestion of an earthly dominion at that time?

The phrase "the kingdom of heaven" is not a kingdom distinct from the "kingdom of God." A comparison of passages in Matthew where "kingdom of heaven" is used with corresponding passages in other Gospels where "kingdom of God" is used, is sufficient to show that the writers had no thought of drawing any sharp distinction between the two.

*And what of the idea that the Gospels (and Acts) are Jewish and not church truth?*

Our only discovery from the passages we have examined is that Christ gave to the chosen people the first opportunity to accept Him and to become His witnesses throughout the earth. Could it have been otherwise?

It follows that, in presenting the Gospel to them, it must be done with a view to meeting the Jewish bigotry of the times, and of leading them out from under the dispensation of law into the age of "grace and truth." Dr. Scofield rightly says, "The synoptic gospels are intermediate between the dispensations of law and of grace and partake of the character of each." This means that the church in using the Gospels must take them in the light of the finished work of the Cross and in the light of the fact that the Holy Spirit at Pentecost came to empower believers to do all that Christ in His teachings required of them. The problems of the Gentile believer are not the same as those of the Jew, and for this reason, he will find the Church Epistles especially

adapted to his needs. However, is it not safe to say that Christ in the Gospels requires nothing of His people that is not somewhere duplicated in the Epistles? All of the Gospels were written after Pentecost, and were given by the One Spirit to the one Church. Could it ever have occurred to the disciples that the church would attempt to use the teachings of the Gospels except in the light of Calvary's Cross and Pentecost?

*And finally—Was Christ the King of the Jews?* He was. He alone, as the virgin-born Seed of David's line could possess the Kingly titles. He still possesses them. Evidently the time has not yet come for Him to exercise His full rights. At the appointed time He will ask the Father (not the Jews) and *He* will give Him what is promised in the prophecies. (See Ps. 2:8, 9). When the time comes for Him to take the throne, He will do so without consulting any man's opinion or attempting to surround Himself with human supporters. He will come as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and they who crucified Him will look upon Him and mourn; for they will see that He whom they ignorantly murdered was not only the Savior of the world but their King.

But, was it the purpose of the King to set up an earthly kingdom in His first advent? I leave the question to be answered by the Scriptures we have heretofore referred to. David was anointed a king, and was rightfully Israel's king for a long period during which a usurper sat upon the throne. During that period he did not exercise his kingly rights; nor did he try to possess himself of them until God's appointed time for him to ascend the throne.

*SOME IMPORTANT QUESTIONS.*

As I have from time to time, reviewed the passages above set forth, many questions have been raised in my mind. I do not attempt to answer these for the reader, but believing them to be worthy of the consideration of every careful Bible student, I give them herewith.

*AS TO JOHN THE BAPTIST.*

1. When did the Gospel of Jesus Christ God's Son, begin? (Mk. 1:1-3; Lk. 16:16; Heb. 2:3; Acts 13:23-24). Did not the Gospel era have its beginning in the preaching of John who was sent to bear witness of the Light?

2. Does John the Baptist anywhere refer to Christ as King of the Jews, or as the Messiah?

3. Could John make a *bona fide* offer of the Davidic kingdom while as yet the sin-question remained unsettled? If John should come today and announce the Davidic kingdom "at hand," would it not be nearer the truth?

4. Is there any hint from John concerning national deliverance for Israel, at the time of the first advent?

5. To whom was John's message applicable? (Jno. 1:29). To Jews only, or to the world?

6. John announced Christ as Sin-bearer and Baptizer with the Holy Ghost. Did the three thousand baptized at Pentecost, after having heard the Word of salvation, become thereby identified with the kingdom John had announced "at hand"? If so, what kingdom was it?

7. Was John's mission a failure? Did not John liken the people he had prepared to a bride made ready for the Bridegroom (Jn. 3:25-30)? and was not his joy fulfilled in the complete success of his mission?

8. Was not John the herald of the age of "grace and truth"—"the day of salvation"—"the acceptable year of the Lord"?



9. Would not the fact that baptism, a rite introduced by John in connection with a kingdom he was announcing as "at hand," still continues in the church, seem to indicate that the kingdom John announced still continues?

### *AS TO JESUS CHRIST.*

1. Does Christ anywhere by word or action indicate that He came to overthrow Gentile governments, interrupt the times of the Gentiles, and set up a throne on earth?

2. Do not the words found in Lk. 4:18; Isa. 61:1-2, spoken at the beginning of Christ's ministry, plainly declare the character of His mission?

3. If God's hour had arrived for seating His Son on a throne on earth, could there be a possibility of a failure?

4. Could a Jew be justly expected to recognize in the lowly prophet of Nazareth their King, seeing that the prophecies all pictured His advent as King, as accompanied with power and great glory?

5. Did Christ really present Himself as King in Mt. 21:1-11; Lk. 19:37-38; Mk. 11:1-10? Was this His conception or that of the people? (There is no question as to His kingly title—but only as to His purpose to take the throne at that time).

6. Must Christ stop to present His credentials and get a following before He takes the throne of David?

7. In the light of the prophecies, could the successor to David's throne be other than a resurrected man?

8. Was not the acclamation of Christ a King a wrong thought on the part of the Jews (Jn. 18:33-36)?

9. Was not the world fully matured for the mission on which Christ came? (Gal. 4:4-5). What was that mission? Could the establishment of an earthly kingdom have had any place within the scope of His mission at that time?

10. Did not Christ, in referring to His earthly rule, always refer to it as in the future when He should come in glory?

## AS TO THE KINGDOM.

1. Mt. 16:19; Acts 2:41; 10:40-48. If Peter used the keys at Pentecost, what kingdom did he open? Was it the kingdom John had announced as "at hand"? If the kingdom of heaven which Peter threw open to all, was that of the present age, then was it not indeed "at hand" when John proclaimed it? (See Acts 15:7).

2. If the "kingdom of heaven" in the first twelve chapters of Matthew refers to Christ's earthly kingdom, and in Matt. 13 (the parables almost universally conceded to refer to the present age) means some other kingdom, how is it that Matthew gave no warning that the term from that point on was taking on an entirely new meaning?

3. Did the Jews reject the offer of an earthly kingdom, or did they reject the counsel of God *against themselves* (Lk. 7:28-30)? Did they refuse to come to Him that they might have an earthly kingdom? or was it that they might have life (Jn. 5:40)?

4. When Simeon referred to the "consolation of Israel" (Lk. 2:25) did he mean the overthrow of Gentile governments and establishment of Israel? He had the promise that he should see "the Lord's Christ" and when he saw Him and said "I have seen Thy Salvation"; what did he mean?

5. Was not the promise of Gen. 22:18, the Gospel in prophecy (Gal. 3:8-9), rather than a prophecy of earth-rule? (Rom. 1:2). Was not the "blessing" spoken of fulfilled in the bestowal of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 3:13-14)?

6. What, according to prophecy, was to be the manner of the introduction of the Davidic kingdom (Ps. 110; Ezek. 37:21-25; Zech. 12:1-10)?

## AS TO THE GOSPELS.

1. When Christ says, in the Great Commission, "teach all things whatsoever I have commanded"—did He not refer to the commandments recorded in the Gospels?

2. What shall we do with such passages as 1 Tim. 6:3-5; Jn. 6:63, 68, Heb. 2:3; 2 Jn. 9, 10; Jn. 14:23-26? Should not the Holy Spirit make a distinction between "kingdom teaching" and "church truth"? Has He done so?

3. It is said that the church has never lived up to the Sermon on the Mount, and that indeed it is impossible in this age. Has the church lived up to the Epistles? Can one live up to the Epistles except by the power of the Holy Spirit? Is the Spirit less powerful in this age than He will be in the kingdom age? Is the Sermon on the Mount too much for the Holy Spirit? Will it be easier for the Jews than for God's own children?

4. Is there any Scripture to show that the Sermon on the Mount applies to a kingdom that has never yet come? Is it not singular that so large a part of our New Testament should be devoted to laws of a kingdom that lay so far in the future? The sermon closes with Mt. 7:24-29. Are the words "whosoever" and "everyone" limited to the Jews? If so, must they not be so limited in John 3:16, etc.?

5. Do not the beatitudes define the character of those who compose the true church? What need will there be of such "laws" as are given in the Sermon on the Mount, in the millennium? Will there be great persecutions (Mt. 5:11-12), adultery (v. 27-28), outbreking sin (29-30), fornication (32) evil forces (39) lawsuits (40-41), beggars (42) cursing (44), hypocrisy (6:16), false prophets (7:15)? Or does the Sermon on the Mount apply only to the last three and a half years of the great tribulation?



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